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ABSTRACT

This theme issue addresses current trends and new developments in ensuring that individuals with disabilities have meaningful employment opportunities, especially in the context of recent federal legislation. Stressed throughout is the importance of collaboration among professionals, individuals with disabilities, and family members in achieving employment goals. Major articles are as follows: "The Evolution of Supported Employment" (David R. Johnson and Darrell R. Lewis); "A Common Sense Approach to Meaningful Employment" (Michael Callahan); "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Supported Employment" (David R. Johnson et al.); "Collaboration, Creativity, and Creation: The Three C's for Rural Rehabilitation" (Randall Morris et al.); "Collaboration, Vision, Redefinition: The Transition to Work Project" (Maggie Hess); "Dakota: Quality Service through Innovative Management" (Hans Swemie); "Wood Lane: Developing Individual Potential" (Teresa Fulk and Melinda Slusser); "Minnesota Mainstream: Supporting Professionals with Mental Illness" (Rand Adams); "National Trends in Day and Employment Services" (Martha J. McGaughey); "IDEA and Rehab Act Amendments: Impact on Employment" (Barbara Guy et al.); "Funding Long-Term Support: Ideas from Experts" (Joyce M. Albin and Roz Slovic); and "Fee for Service" (Gail Rheinheimer et al.). A list of suggested resources including organizations, publications and training materials, and pamphlets and other materials concludes the issue. (DB)

IMPACT

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Interagency collaboration is one key to successful employment for persons with disabilities. Here, students from Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) build a fence in a collaborative work project between BHSSC, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and Job Service of South Dakota. See story page 6.

The Evolution of Supported Employment

by David R. Johnson and Darrell R. Lewis

The recent emergence of supported employment programs in the United States has substantially raised expectations concerning the viability of employment in promoting the inclusion, productivity, and independence of persons with severe disabilities. Traditionally, adults with severe disabilities were provided access to habilitation and rehabilitation services in predominantly segregated settings or not at all. During the 1960s and 70s, adult day activity centers and sheltered workshops became the primary service delivery models. Many of these programs offered individuals little more than token wages for performing menial tasks or simulated work. Such services were viewed, however, as essential in leading individuals through various stages of development to reach higher levels of job "readiness" and ultimately competitive employment. The actual movement of individuals with severe disabilities into competitive employment from sheltered workshops, work activity and day activity programs simply did not occur. Further, individuals with severe disabilities experienced few opportunities for social and community integration through these programs.

More recently, a number of conceptual frameworks for competitive and supported employment have been put forth. These models apply learning and behavior principles to job training and employment for persons with severe disabilities, stressing the importance of job

Evolution, continued on page 19

From the Editors

This issue of IMPACT addresses current trends and new developments in ensuring individuals with disabilities meaningful employment opportunities. Emphasized throughout this publication is the importance of collaboration among professionals, individuals with disabilities, and family members in achieving desired employment goals.

As a backdrop to our current efforts to improve supported employment and related rehabilitation programs is the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992. The Amendments contain a streamlined eligibility determination process, a special emphasis on supporting young adults at the time of transition from school, a requirement for increased consumer involvement in service planning, a special emphasis placed on serving persons with severe disabilities, and language calling for an expansion of the scope of rehabilitation services available to individuals with disabilities. The challenge is now one of ensuring that the purposes and intent of these new provisions are fully implemented and result in a more responsive service delivery system.

We hope that this issue of IMPACT encourages exploration of new employment strategies and options. In the total scheme of things, employment remains one of the most important objectives in the nation's agenda for promoting the independence, productivity, and community integration of people with disabilities.

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A Common Sense Approach to Meaningful Employment

by Michael Callahan

A noted writer of detective mysteries, John D. MacDonald, once surmised that "meaning," the essence of why certain things are important, simply "comes from anything someone finds meaningful." The problem, of course, is who gets to decide what is meaningful. Traditionally, in the field of vocational services for persons with disabilities, professionals have largely decided what is meaningful. However, it's becoming increasingly clear that the recipients of our services must guide the quest for "meaning" in employment.

If we were to apply this perspective to supported employment, achieving meaningful outcomes should be easy. We would simply need to discover those factors and situations that each applicant views as having meaning, identify jobs that contain as many of those conditions as possible, and attempt to develop a job for the applicant in one of those settings. Traditional practitioners in the employment of persons with severe physical disabilities might view this approach as simplistic and nonprofessional. However, these same professionals are undoubtedly aware of the woefully inadequate employment opportunities that have historically been offered to this group of people. If hard-nosed sales techniques that focus on a traditional labor market perspective have not resulted in sufficient jobs for persons with severe physical disabilities, perhaps a simpler, common sense approach is needed.

■ One Approach to Meaningful Employment

In 1987, United Cerebral Palsy Associations (UCPA) received a federal grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to demonstrate the effectiveness of an individually driven employment strategy to achieve supported employment outcomes for persons with severe physical disabilities. At the project sites - seven UCPA local affiliates in Alabama, Illinois, and New Jersey - the challenge was clear: Was it possible to offer meaningful employment opportunities to persons who had failed the evaluations supposedly designed to offer information on employability and job match? If the answer was to be yes, at least part of the rationale was to ignore all the negative information that had been amassed on the applicants. This strategy freed our employment specialists from the trap of negative self-fulfilling prophecy. This perspective alone was not sufficient, however, to create the meaningful employment opportunities that were wanted and needed by the project participants. In response to this, an optimistically focused, individualized strategy for supported employment was pieced together from all the "best practices" for supported employment available at the time.

■ A Tool for Successful Matching

Perhaps the greatest challenge in providing supported employment for persons with severe physical disabilities is the identification of potentially successful job matches in the face of consistently negative evaluative data on the applicants. Standardized employability evaluations routinely label persons with severe disabilities as "unemployable." An evaluation that indicates that an applicant is unemployable is not likely to provide much useful information on effective job matching. This inconsistency has led many supported employment providers to seek alternative indicators of applicant performance and preference.

The UCPA supported employment project chose to use the Vocational Profile strategy (Nisbet, Callahan, 1987) as a process to guide job matching and development efforts for its applicants who routinely perform poorly on standardized measures. The Vocational Profile attempts to balance the need to compile accurate and meaningful vocational information with the natural and individualized aspects of acquiring employment. It focuses on demonstrated skills, life experiences, preferences, connections, support of family and friends, and impact of technology. It has four stages:

- Developing comprehensive information on the applicant.
- Compiling the information into a usable format.
- Disseminating the profile to all appropriate parties.
- Conducting a profile meeting to focus job development efforts toward potential opportunities desired by the applicant and consistent with the profile information.

This process culminates with a prospect list for the employment specialist to use in making employer contacts. The key to the success of the strategy is that virtually every employer contact is driven by considerations that can be traced directly back to the applicant's skills, needs, and preferences.

This approach to acquiring information on applicants with severe disabilities differs from traditional, standardized assessment in a number of critical ways:

- The vocational profile consists of previously-existing information rather than information developed solely for the purposes of evaluation. Job selection is based on information obtained from the person's entire life, not from an instance of performance.
- The profile is used only as a guide for matching an individual to an appropriate job and is not intended to exclude a person from a certain job.
- The profile seeks to have ecological validity rather than

predictive validity. It is more important that a match make sense in relation to a person's life than that it attempt to predict success. Predicting measures almost invariably predict failure for persons with severe disabilities.

- Use of the profile frees the applicant from taking standardized or norm-referenced tests to prove his/her readiness. Readiness to begin work is assumed for all applicants.
- The use of a profile indicates a belief that a person's skills, experiences, available supports, preferences, needs, and living situation cannot be captured using standardized norms and checklists. A format composed of open-ended categories allows each person to be described in a more positive manner for employment planning.
- The profile strategy seeks to empower and involve applicants, their families, and friends rather than to exclude them. Natural, common-sense approaches to employment are given priority over strategies that rely solely on professional judgment and services.

■ The Story of Roger

Possibly the most effective way to demonstrate meaningful outcomes of a common-sense, individualized approach to supported employment is to describe an actual situation experienced by one of the project participants. Roger acquired a severe physical disability in an automobile accident when he was a teenager. Following his accident, he was diagnosed as having a spinal cord injury and quadriplegia. His experiences with traditional rehabilitation services were not encouraging. He knew that the printing field was rapidly changing as a result of computers, and felt that if he could learn to work a computer and access a keyboard, he might find employment in that area. However, it was determined through extensive vocational assessment that he was not suitable for this type of work. Due to his quadriplegia, it was believed that Roger could not access a keyboard quickly enough to meet the demands of employers. Additionally, he had no formal training in using computers in the printing field. He was bluntly told that he was not a suitable candidate for community employment.

Even though confronted with this lack of encouragement, Roger acquired a personal computer through his own efforts and taught himself how to write software programs. While living in a group home, he designed a software program that could assist a printing firm to manage orders, production deadlines, and financial information.

Roger relocated to a larger metropolitan area, hoping that the employment situation would be better, and began residing in a transitional living group home operated by UCPA. His vocational rehabilitation counselor referred him to the UCPA supported employment project after exhausting options to employ him through traditional means.

The initial activity for Roger as a project participant was the development of a vocational profile. During this activity and later in the profile meeting, Roger clearly stated that he had "always dreamed of working in a printing company." He also showed the employment specialist his computer system and examples of programs he had written.

His employment specialist never questioned that Roger was employable or that an employer would be willing to hire him. She started her job development efforts by contacting a family friend whose son owned a large printing company. This personalized approach netted the employment specialist a meeting with the owner and, ultimately, a job. Roger interviewed for the job and convinced the employer that the software programs he had written would be helpful to the company. The matter of Roger's slower productivity was also discussed. The employer felt that quality and depth of understanding of business processes was more important than speed. Roger's enthusiasm indicated to the employer that he would attend to quality concerns and the employment specialist assured the employer that business acumen could be acquired through experience and the assistance available during job site training.

Roger began employment in February, 1988, working 20 hours per week. By the end of his first year of employment, he was working 30-34 hours per week, had received a raise, and his life was more stable. However, possibly the most meaningful outcome of supported employment for Roger occurred early in 1990 when he resigned from his job at the printing company. This would typically not be viewed as a positive outcome in supported employment. However, in Roger's case, it involved the opportunity for him to move back to his home area, to a full-time job that he himself developed in another printing company.

■ Conclusion

Employment for persons whose disabilities affect their lives in significant ways requires highly personalized and creative strategies. During the project, more than 100 persons were employed, most of whom had been previously labeled as unemployable based on their performance on standardized vocational evaluations. Clearly, the direction for our efforts to develop such employment must be driven more by preferences, needs, and skills of the applicants than by a human service analysis of labor market and employer needs.

Michael Callahan is Project Manager of the National Supported Employment Demonstration Project, United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Washington, D.C.

Note: This article was adapted and reprinted with permission of Butterworth-Heinemann from Common sense and quality: Meaningful employment outcomes for persons with severe disabilities, Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 1 (2), April 1991, pp 21-28.

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Evaluating the Effectiveness of Supported Employment

by David R. Johnson, Darrell R. Lewis, and Robert H. Bruininks

Today, supported employment (SE) is being advocated on the basis of its positive social and economic impact on individuals, and its economic benefits to society. The extent to which SE programs are fulfilling these individual and societal goals and outcomes remains center-stage in deliberations regarding the expansion of such services nationally. Questions concerning SE costs, accountability, and effectiveness are increasingly being asked by policymakers and professionals at the federal, state, and county levels. It may be argued that without a better understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of employment integration and its inter-relatedness to other SE outcomes (e.g., increased earnings and placement rates) and costs, the current high levels of public and professional support for this program alternative may diminish. This will require that present methods for evaluating SE's effectiveness be substantially improved.

■ Definitions of Effectiveness

The notion of what constitutes an "effective" SE program means different things to different people. Individuals with disabilities and their family members are inherently concerned with SE's capacity to improve individual levels of economic self-sufficiency and quality of life. Professionals and policymakers certainly hold similar interests, but their attention is also directed to the broader aspects of program operation and management, such as achievement of agency mission, staff productivity, agency accountability, and capacity to address differing characteristics and needs of individuals served. In broadest terms, effectiveness evaluation involves identifying (from differing perspectives) and measuring the multiple goals and outcomes of a social program.

Research and evaluation methods focusing on SE programs are still in their early stages of development. To date, evaluation studies in SE have investigated outcomes from a narrow and often singular perspective, such as earnings and related economic outcomes, attained levels of physical and social integration, or improvements in quality of life among program participants. From a program effectiveness standpoint, the tendency has been to identify and attempt to measure an array of intangible social benefits, largely included under the labels "integration" and "quality of life." While studies of this nature have contributed information that has aided professionals and policymakers in understanding the relative merits of SE, rarely are these multiple economic and social outcomes linked into an integrated or multi-dimensional perspective. This has not only limited our understanding of SE's effectiveness in achieving its goals, but has prevented efforts to link multiple program outcomes to costs. Linkage is essential when attempting to derive meaningful cost-effectiveness measures. Such measures are also of critical importance in comparing alternative SE models and current service delivery options.

■ Evaluation of Effectiveness

Effectiveness evaluation should entail the following activities: (1) identifying key outcomes, goals, and information needs; (2) developing a conceptual framework to guide the evaluation process and subsequent analyses; (3) specifying the nature of comparisons to be made; (4) specifying and operationalizing multiple outcome measures and indicators; and (5) collecting and analyzing outcome and other data appropriate to addressing earlier information needs and questions. A brief explanation of these activities follows:

- **Identifying Outcomes, Goals, and Information Needs.** This initial step in effectiveness evaluation involves individuals with disabilities, family members, professional staff, advisory board members, and other stakeholders in a collaborative planning process to identify key evaluation questions and related outcome measures for study and analysis. Such participation is not only important, but also improves the quality of the evaluation design and support for results obtained later.
- **Developing a Conceptual Framework.** Conceptual frameworks and models are often used to depict critical dependent and independent variables expected to influence outcomes in employment programs. Most models attempt to illustrate the interactive nature of individual and program variables related to SE outcomes. In simplest terms, a typical conceptual framework or model used in evaluating rehabilitation programs would examine interrelationships between system inputs (the client), intervention (rehabilitation services the client receives), and output/outcomes (the extent to which the client achieves intended employment goals).
- **Specifying Comparisons**. In order to conduct program effectiveness evaluations, comparisons must be specified and available to the evaluator. Several comparisons can be employed in evaluating the effectiveness of SE programs: (1) intra-program comparisons of differing SE models (i.e., individual placement, enclave, mobile work crew, and

entrepreneurial models; sheltered work vs. supported employment); (b) comparisons by consumer characteristics (i.e., disability type and level, gender); (c) cross-program/agency comparisons; and (d) longitudinally-based comparisons of the same individuals or programs over time.

- **Specifying Outcomes and Indicators.** Identifying, selecting, and operationalizing relevant and measurable outcomes is one of the most pressing issues in conducting meaningful outcome or effectiveness evaluations of SE. Individual outcomes are most often categorized in monetary and nonmonetary terms. Monetary outcomes include wages received per hour or week, net annual earnings (less taxes paid), hours worked per week, and job tenure. Nonmonetary outcomes include employment integration, quality of life, and skill acquisition and maintenance. Effectiveness evaluation also assesses a program's accomplishments in achieving its measures and goals. Here, too, monetary and nonmonetary outcomes can be measured. Summative information can be developed to measure program effectiveness (e.g., program placement rates in community employment, average earnings and related work benefits attained by program participants, degree or level of agency change over from segregated to integrated employment). Nonmonetary outcomes may include levels of satisfaction expressed by consumers, family members, and employers with the quality and effectiveness of employment services provided by the program or agency.
- **Analyzing Outcome Data.** An extensive review of approaches used in analyzing outcome data and information goes beyond the scope of this article. Decisions about how data are to be analyzed should be made early in the planning stages of an outcome assessment, in conjunction with decisions about information needs, variables and their measurement, data sources, and audiences (DeStefano & Wagner, 1990).

Collectively, these activities provide a logical framework for evaluating supported employment's effectiveness and program impact. The extent to which supported employment produces positive social and economic outcomes for individuals with disabilities and society as a whole will remain an issue of considerable interest among policymakers, professionals, and consumers alike. Over the next several years, supported employment, along with other employment programs, will need to marshal comprehensive and accurate information on their effectiveness and impact to sustain their current momentum and relevance on a national scale.

■ Conclusion

From this brief overview of current supported employment evaluation practices, it is readily apparent that we have some distance to go in demonstrating the full importance and viability of this service program. Researchers and policymakers must continue to experiment and ultimately derive better methods for evaluati upported employment's effectiveness. Given the current political and economic climate nationally, indicators of effectiveness and quality will increasingly be used to gauge decisions regarding funding and the continuation of these important employment services.

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David R. Johnson is Associate Director with the Institute on Community Integration; Darrell R. Lewis is Professor with the Department of Educational Policy and Administration; and Robert H. Bruininks is Dean of the College of Education, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

APSE: Supporting Supported Employment

The Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) is a national organization established to improve and expand integrated employment opportunities and services for persons with severe disabilities. APSE exists because:

> The activity of supporting individuals with severe disabilities in community employment has its own set of realities. SE calls for departing from segregated services in favor of joining the non-handicapped world...The outcomes of SE are surprising employers, co-workers, parents, professionals, individuals with disabilities, and most assuredly human service workers with successes never before expected. But, supported employment is a new service competing with other approaches for limited resources. Supported employment is serving people who were previously not considered employable. Supported employment is calling into question some other service approaches which have not demonstrated meaningful outcomes. Therefore, supported employment is struggling for recognition and secure and adequate funding support.

To those working in and advocating for supported employment, APSE offers opportunities for mutual support and information sharing. It publishes a quarterly newsletter, *The Advance*, as well as notices on state and national policy relevant to supported employment. It also holds an annual national conference providing a forum for sharing information and improving supported employment practice and opportunities.

For further information on APSE membership call (804) 282-3655.

Collaboration, Creativity, and Creation: The Three C's for Rural Rehabilitation

by Randall Morris, Robert Markve, and Eric Rudrud

One of society's major expectations of schools is that the educational system will prepare students for entry into the world of work and self sufficiency. However, many former students with special needs are at home without services following graduation. Since 1970, more than 2.5 million youth with disabilities have left the nation's public school system with only 23% either fully employed or enrolled in college; 40% were underemployed and earning wages at or near the poverty level; and 26% were unemployed and on welfare (Wright, Emener, & Ashley, 1988).

Recent initiatives and mandates by federal, state, and local educational agencies have called for development of effective programs and services to facilitate the transition from school to work. Transition is not a single program, separate and apart from special education, vocational education, guidance, and/or career education; rather, each component is integrated within the transition process. Thus, effective transition requires the development of a partnership among all interested parties (state and local educational programs, postsecondary training providers, consumers and their parents, and local businesses) to identify roles and responsibilities in ensuring each student's success.

Developing effective transition, vocational training, and rehabilitation services within rural settings is often difficult due to limited economic opportunities, great distances, lack of public transportation, and lack of services and trained staff. The Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) of Sturgis, South Dakota, has implemented a variety of innovative and cooperative programs that are overcoming these obstacles.

■ Obstacles for Rural Service Delivery

One major challenge facing rural communities is the implementation of effective models of transition, training, and rehabilitation services that allow individuals with severe disabilities to enter and maintain meaningful employment. Characteristics of rural settings that often limit the utility of existing supported employment models include:

- A small and homogeneous economic base, which limits the types of jobs available and variety of options. Thus, it is often difficult to meet the unique needs of individuals with severe disabilities within existing businesses.
- Great distances between service centers. This often limits the utility of work crews and independent placements because of travel time and distance between sites. The expense of obtaining a contract and/or providing follow-along services becomes prohibitive when travel to an individual work site may take over an hour.
- Lack of public transportation services.
- Lack of services and trained staff. Many rural communities lack vocational rehabilitation services. Further, many rural communities are not able to attract staff trained in rehabilitation counseling and supported employment. This is often due to scarcity of programs, low salaries in rural communities, and lack of employment opportunities for other family members.

These obstacles in rural communities can be overcome through the development of innovative cooperative partnerships between state, federal, and public agencies, and the private business sector.

■ BHSSC Program Overview

Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC) is a special education cooperative with 12 member school districts. The BHSSC serves a geographic area of 10,600 square miles in western South Dakota that has one major city of 80,000 people. The area is characterized by small rural communities whose economies are primarily based in agriculture, mining, and forest products industries. BHSSC provides vocational assessment, training, transition, and job development services to high school students and adults who reside in the Black Hills area. Approximately 300 individuals with a range of disabilities receive services through BHSSC programs.

To overcome the constraints of existing supported employment models in rural settings, BHSSC developed and implemented an entrepreneurial model of supported employment. BHSSC has entrepreneurial sites in textile manufacturing, furniture manufacturing, and woodworking. The entrepreneurial model calls for the creation of new businesses, within rural communities, which provide meaningful work in integrated employment settings. These businesses employ not only individuals who are receiving services through BHSSC, but also hire individuals from the local communities. Thus, this model has resulted in meaningful employment for individuals with and without disabilities and has also contributed to local economic development activities. This model is a result of collaboration among BHSSC, state and federal special education and rehabilitation agencies, and private sector employers.

■ Keys to Success

The entrepreneurial model provides benefits to clients, employers, and the community. Benefits to clients include minimized transportation costs, creation of new jobs that expand job placement possibilities, integration with nondisabled individuals, flexibility in meeting unique client needs, development of work histories that facilitate future placements, meaningful work, and wages. Benefits for employers include the development of manufacturing sites that produce products at a competitive price, and exceptional quality assurance. Rural communities also benefit from the implementation of this model through creation of new businesses within economically depressed rural areas, an increased tax base for the communities, and new jobs.

The primary key to realizing these benefits is collaboration with a variety of state, federal, and public agencies and the private sector. BHSSC has collaborated with the South Dakota Department of Special Education, Division of Vocational Education, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Department of Labor, Court Services, and Social Services. Federal agencies have included the Ft. Meade Veterans Hospital, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Forest Service, and funding provided through Projects With Industry. Students are referred from the 12 member school districts and other school districts across the state. Private businesses provide manufacturing and employment opportunities. Cooperative agreements, funding, needs assessments, and program direction are provided through the dynamic interaction of these groups.

Using a collaborative approach, the following program components have been implemented, leading to BHSSC's success in providing services:

- **Working partnerships with business communities.** BHSSC coordinates with local business and industry to develop business opportunities and secure work experience, on-the-job training, supported work sites, and competitive employment for students and adults with disabilities.
- **Focus on individuals served**. A variety of programs have been implemented to meet the needs of individuals, including the Vocational Assessment Units and the Career Learning Center. BHSSC operates three vocational evaluation units that have a full range of assessment capabilities. Assessment in the areas of work skills and abilities, cognitive and motor functioning, vocational aptitude and interest testing, and career awareness is available. The Vocational Assessment Center provides services in-house and on a referral basis. Two mobile units provide vocational assessment services throughout the state and surrounding geographic areas. The Career Learning Center provides vocational counseling, job development, job training, and rehabilitation services to recently graduated, postsecondary individuals, and unemployed adults in the western region of South Dakota. Participants enter into a program of instruction that includes basic and remedial education, life-coping skills, and job-seeking and maintaining skills. The final stage of the program is a self-directed search for employment.
- **Diversified resource allocation**. To develop the array of services provided, a variety of funding and resource mechanisms are used. This has necessitated collaboration in developing funding mechanisms, submitting grant applications, implementing interagency agreements, and allocating resources by private businesses. Projects With Industry grants, Jobs Training and Partnership monies, Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education funds, and local education funds have been utilized to provide services. The limited funding available in rural settings can be overcome through joint partnerships.
- **Focus on job development and placement**. During the past two decades, research has shown that individuals with severe disabilities can acquire the skills necessary to obtain and maintain competitive and supported employment. Using the "place and train" model of supported employment, BHSSC has given primary emphasis to job development and placement. The entrepreneurial model provides the necessary training and support for individuals to achieve and maintain employment.

■ Conclusion

Obstacles that exist in providing vocational and transition services in rural communities may be overcome through the development of innovative and collaborative relationships between agencies, providers, and private sector business. Using the entrepreneurial model, BHSSC has provided work sites for individuals who might otherwise have been unemployed. The work sites are close to ideal in terms of work-force integration and provide meaningful work and wages. Further, the model contributes to rural economic development by hiring workers from the local communities. The BHSSC entrepreneurial sites demonstrate that, properly supported, workers with disabilities can be profitably employed in rural areas.

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Randall Morris is Director and Robert Markve is Director of Manufacturing, Black Hills Special Services Cooperative, Sturgis, South Dakota. Eric Rudrud is Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Collaboration, Vision, Redefinition: The *Transition to Work Project*

by Maggie Hess

The mission of the Hamilton County Transition to Work Project is to assist students/consumers with severe disabilities to successfully complete their transition from school to community competitive employment. The mission is carried out through interagency collaboration and cooperation, a shared vision among participants, and redefinition of traditional staff roles.

The Transition to Work Project is administered by the Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development in Cincinnati, Ohio; the Hamilton County (Ohio) Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities; and the Cincinnati Public Schools. Since its start in 1985, 177 students have been referred to the project from 35 classrooms in 25 school districts. Each year, the project works to obtain competitive employment for up to 25 students with severe disabilities through the use of job trainers or job coaches.

The employment outlook is very positive for the students with disabilities served by the project, and the benefits to employers as well as to the young people continue to grow.

Prior to beginning a job, the job trainer works with the student to identify his/her optimal learning styles by performing a learning assessment. When a potential job site has been located, the job trainer analyzes the tasks involved in the job, as well as the best way to teach the job to the student. Following the assessment and analysis, a job match meeting is held to determine if the student's interests, skills, and abilities match those required by the potential job. If a successful match is made, the job trainer assists the student with one-to-one training and support at the job site until the student has mastered the job and is working independently. Successful completion of the on-the-job training component occurs only when the consumer has maintained successful competitive employment without trainer assistance for at least 60 days. Because the project is funded by the Ohio Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, services can continue to be provided to students after graduation, as well.

This project is innovative in several ways. First, it has fostered joint partnerships/collaboration among agencies. There is a strong commitment by participating agencies to continue the project and to work together to address issues and solve problems as needed. This has been particularly evidenced by the willingness of the agencies to share the cost of the project when its funding was cut.

A second innovative feature of the project is the shared vision among the participating agency personnel that youth with severe disabilities can be productive workers and contributing members of their communities. The project has also influenced the overall philosophy and program activities of the collaborating agencies. The monthly management team meetings provide the avenue for each agency to assist in developing policy and guidelines, approve procedures and forms, and address community-wide issues that impact the program. When decisions and recommendations are made by the management team, the one question always asked is, "How does this help us reach our vision?" This collaboration and shared vision have influenced the overall philosophies and program activities of the participating agencies. Examples include shifts toward involvement of adult service agencies at an earlier age, and initiation of programs for students with disabilities that promote peer collaboration/cooperative learning, self advocacy, and choice making.

A third innovative feature is a redefining of traditional staff roles. The project has been a forerunner for transition within the community, resulting in expansion of the roles of the work study coordinator, job trainer, vocational rehabilitation counselor, and classroom special education teacher. As a result of this expansion, the responsibilities of the work-study coordinator now include job development for youth with severe disabilities. The job trainer's duties involve on-the-job training as well as client and job analysis prior to placement. The vocational rehabilitation counselor is now involved in the transition planning process for secondary youth. And the special education teacher has increased responsibility for preparing students for independent living and work place readiness. In addition, the project actively supports the use of the Michigan Training (a-week-long standardized training for job trainers), has solidified the role of coaches, and has heightened awareness and positive attitude change in employers.

The Transition to Work project is able to deliver quality vocational services for youth with disabilities through interagency collaboration, an individualized approach to serving clients, flexibility, and the focus on employment as the final outcome. The employment outlook is very positive for the students with disabilities served by the project, and the bene- fits to employers as well as young people continue to grow.

Maggie Hess is Manager of Disability Education , Hamilton County Transition to Work Project, Great Oaks Institute of Technology and Career Development, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Dakota: Quality Service Through Innovative Management

by Hans Swemle

Dakota, Inc. is committed to assisting the community and people challenged by disabilities to live and work together. Its supported employment program is exceptional in how it is managed and promoted.

Dakota, Inc., is a private, nonprofit, day training and habilitation organization serving 415 people in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area. It was formed by parents and advocates to serve children and adults with developmental disabilities. With funding from county service contracts, the Department of Rehabilitation Services, and federal Medical Assistance, Dakota has provided individualized community services since 1965.

In 1985, Dakota began its supported employment program. That year, five persons with disabilities earned a total of $840. In 1992, 284 people earned nearly three-quarters of a million dollars working in 116 businesses.

Dakota works hard to discover people's interests and support them as they make choices about their lives. Through its supported employment services, Dakota finds jobs in community businesses and provides on-the-job support that ranges from full-time supervision to biweekly check-ins by job coaches. Though Dakota has two job developers on staff, job prospecting is everyone's responsibility. It especially targets corporations that have more than 500 employees, that deal with a great deal of paper, and that see themselves as good corporate citizens.

Once Dakota has established a relationship with a business, job coaches are responsible for becoming part of the corporate culture in order to facilitate integration of the employees with disabilities. Job coaches continually look for new opportunities within the business, both for additional workers and for career exploration on the part of those already employed.

One proof of the success of this approach is the story of a man named Fred. Fred has held a clerical position at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota (BCBSM) since May, 1989. He removes staples from claims, tapes cards to documents, and stuffs envelopes. Challenged by cerebral palsy, Fred is part of a team of six workers supported by one job coach. Referred to Dakota in 1987, developers placed him at a hotel laundry where he pressed sheets and folded towels, but he craved more contact with people. Next, he wrapped silverware and baked pizzas at a restaurant, but had difficulty standing at the ovens. When a position opened up at BCBSM, Fred took it. He now works 25-30 hours per week, is more self-directed, and looks for tasks when finished with an assignment. He is also learning assertiveness skills and letting others know when something is wrong. A sociable man, Fred introduces himself to coworkers and has learned to hold conversations. His job coach cited, as an example of his increased integration, the day a BCBSM employee she had never met invited Fred to a going-away party for one of the people he had befriended on his lunchtime walks around the complex. Fred attended the party on his own, chatting with coworkers as an equal.

Dakota's supported employment services are successful in part because of its approach to managing and promoting its program. Information management, staff development, and marketing/public relations are three areas in which it stands out.

Information management has long been an important performance evaluation tool for Dakota. The community employment report, for example, enables Dakota to track the number of people working, agency employment rate, numbers of hours worked, wages, and retention rate for individuals on a daily basis. In 1991, an automation project was begun that has added to information management agency-wide and given all staff ready access to a computer terminal or laptop. Dakota has designed a client information system to enhance quality and accountability, and streamline the administrative process.

Dakota also emphasizes learning. The agency has implemented a learning system for staff that includes a series of training modules with more than 270 competencies. A new, formal staff mentoring system will further develop and maintain Dakota's internal skill base and recognize key staff for their knowledge and expertise.

Marketing and public relations efforts of the agency focus on building partnerships with the business community. Corporate partners have contributed services in printing, design, video production, marketing and training. For the past several years, more than 100 business sponsors have assisted in producing the Dakota Funfest, a two-day fundraising event that has boosted Dakota's visibility in the community. And, each spring Dakota hosts a thank-you celebration that draws 400 employers, volunteers, donors, and people with disabilities and their families.

Dakota's supported employment services are successful because the agency builds relationships with people with disabilities; their families, friends, employers and coworkers; the business community; and community organizations. Through these partnerships, a shared commitment is developed to community inclusion for persons with developmental disabilities. The result is opportunities for people with disabilities to discover their interests, make choices, find their places in the community, and enrich their own lives.

Hans Swemle is Training Analyst at Dakota, Inc., Eagan Minnesota.

Wood Lane: Developing Individual Potential

by Teresa Fulk and Melinda Slusser

The Wood County Board of Mental Retardation/ Developmental Disabilities in Bowling Green, Ohio, is a public training and rehabilitation service system that offers comprehensive life-spanning services to individuals with developmental disabilities. These services are dedicated to the development of individual skills in educational, social, emotional, physical, and employment areas. Their goal is to enable each individual served to develop to his/her fullest potential as a productive, independent member of society.

In 1985, the Board began its Community Employment Services Program of Wood Lane to offer adults with developmental disabilities an alternative to sheltered workshops. The program provides the following services: a career development group, occupational work sampling, work evaluation, short term transition sites, a mobile work crew, work enclaves, job development and training, habilitation services, case management, psychological services, follow-along services, and employee support options. The program is funded by federal, state and local sources including Chapter 1 (student transition training), Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, and the Private Industry Council.

With a concentration on options outside of sheltered employment, the program has successfully placed over 110 individuals with disabilities in over 170 employment and training sites around Wood County. Out of the more than 90 persons that are currently working through the program, roughly 65 are individual placements. This means that the individual was hired directly by the employer and is working with coworkers who do not have disabilities, allowing them to rely upon the natural supports of the work environment.

The starting point for achieving these successful placements is the initial meeting held when an individual is referred to Community Employment Services. During the meeting the consumer, care providers, and advocate gather as much information as possible about the individual's strengths, abilities, and vocational preferences. Further assessment can be completed through the Occupational Work Sampling program in which the individual is given the chance to work for one month in a variety of settings. The goal of the work sampling is to help the individual identify vocational preferences through actual work experience.

As the individual begins to understand more about the world of work, the program can further assist with career planning through Career Development Groups. Through these groups, job sites are targeted based on the person's job skills and interests, as well as factors such as location, schedule, and overall atmosphere in a particular work place. Once a job is obtained, individualized job coaching occurs using the place and train model. When the consumer is independent from the job coach and working with natural supports, ongoing follow along services are put into place. Services continue until the consumer requests that they end.

The effectiveness of this approach can be seen in the progress made by individuals such as Terri, a 21-year-old woman who has recently celebrated her first anniversary working as a sorter for a local mail service. When Terri was 17 years old, she was having difficulty finding services to meet her needs. She had no previous vocational experience, limited verbal communication skills, autistic-like behaviors, and did not like being in school. She was referred to Community Employment Services for job exposure opportunities.

The plan for Terri was to slowly expand her repertoire of work skills and appropriate behaviors by demanding slightly more of her at each successive job site. Her first vocational placement required her to work only 90 minutes per day in a setting where there was little social interaction. She was driven to the job site daily by two staff from her foster home. With the help of the foster home staff and a job coach provided by Community Employment Services and the Rehabilitation Services Commission, Terri learned her work routine. She remained at this job for six weeks.

At her second job she began coming to work accompanied by just one staff member from the home, and eventually learned to perform her duties with only the job coach for support. She proved herself to be a competent worker, interested in doing a good job and accepting responsibility for her work. She learned to use an electronic communication device with her coach/supervisor, and learned to ride the local school bus to work independently.

Over the next 13 months Terri progressed through three more transitional work experiences, each demanding that she accept more responsibility for her tasks and behavior. She continued to make great strides. Work became the focal point of her day. She learned to pack her lunch, use public transportation, and even to adjust her routine at home to meet fluctuations in her work schedule. Today, after a year in her current job, the new goal is that she maintain employment and also move into a more independent living arrangement.

Community Employment Services brings together services and agencies who collaboratively coordinate the support needed by individuals such as Terri in all areas of their lives. By providing avenues for persons with developmental disabilities to experience job opportunities that help meet their social, emotional and vocational needs, it is enabling them to live in and participate to the fullest extent possible in their communities.

Teresa Fulk is Community Employment Services Supervisor, and Melinda Slusser is Adult Services Director, both with Wood County Board of Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities, Bowling Green, Ohio.

Minnesota Mainstream: Supporting Professionals with Mental Illness

by Rand Adams

Minnesota Mainstream has successfully challenged the myth that people who have major mental illnesses are often unable to work as the professionals they were trained to be. Since it began in October, 1989, its job placement counselors have assisted 121 people who have mental health disabilities, 88 of whom found employment in a wide range of professional fields. Among those placed through Mainstream are a newspaper reporter, airline pilot, college professor, interior designer, social worker, engineer, physicians, accountant, artist, counselor, and lawyers. More impressively, the job retention rate for those securing a professional position was 94 percent! It took most Mainstream associates approximately four and a half months to find just the right job at an average of $8.24 an hour and 29 hours a week.

The impetus for Minnesota Mainstream came directly from mental health consumers' dissatisfaction with existing supported employment programs. The originator of the Mainstream model has a mental health disability, yet had earned a Ph.D. in physics. An obviously intelligent and well-educated man, Dan Brodhead was not satisfied with the type of jobs he had gotten through vocational rehabilitation programs, as they were primarily unskilled service and assembly type positions.

Brodhead and a group of other mental health consumers worked with Rise, a rehabilitation facility outside of Minneapolis, in developing the concept of a placement program that would help people get back to the professional areas for which they had trained or had previously worked. The program was designed to be an administrative partnership between Rise and leaders inside the consumer movement. The result was Minnesota Mainstream, a federally funded project staffed primarily by mental health consumers.

Minnesota Mainstream uses an individualized approach with its associates (job placement candidates). It assists them with identifying, locating, and successfully retaining positions consistent with their interests, aptitudes, and strengths. Equally important is finding a job that enables them to work around any symptoms of their disability.

A key element to the program's success is the mentors who work with Mainstream associates. Mentors provide current information regarding their fields and assist in identifying employment possibilities. Staff may assist in job development and negotiating needed job accommodations.

Mainstream support groups enable associates to use one another as resources in learning how to cope with the stress involved in seeking or maintaining employment. Psychoeducational groups give associates information about disability-related legal issues, resume and cover letter writing, and programs that may be of value to them.

Among the many success stories at Mainstream are those of Maggie* and Frank. Maggie had been employed as a minister in a church. She was one of the first female ministers in that particular denomination, and the difficulties she experienced may have been due in part to the rather conservative nature of her congregation, as well as to the symptoms she was experiencing. She subsequently ended up looking for other work, but the only job she could get was assembly work in an environment with toxic chemicals. Mainstream assisted her in developing an individualized career plan. She decided she would like to continue in the ministry, but in a different setting. She was paired with a mentor, and ultimately obtained a permanent position as a chaplain in a hospital.

Frank had a Master's degree in architecture, but was unable to find work for three years. He applied for more than 80 jobs, but rarely got past the interview stage. His job placement counselor at Mainstream matched him up with a well-known local landscape architect as a mentor. The architect took on Frank as an intern on a special project, and began making employment inquiries for him. This effort led to a part-time consulting project at a prominent local architectural firm, which Frank has been at for two years. He has published an impressive list of writings on landscape history and theory in professional journals, and has received local and national recognition for his work.

The services of Minnesota Mainstream provide the supports that can enable many individuals with mental illness to re-enter and remain in their professions. Administrators of Mainstream are continually exploring new vocational options for program associates, including entrepreneurial models of self employment. Since the federal funding for Mainstream as a demonstration project ended in 1992, Rise has offered the program's services on a fee-for-service basis, remaining committed to dismantling myths and reconstructing hope for professionals challenged by mental health disabilities.

* Pseudonym.

Note: Adapted with permission from Minnesota Mainstream Successful in Helping Mental Health Consumers Return to Professional Vocations, published in the Rise Reporter, November 1992, and Landscape Artist Credits Mainstream for Much of His Professional Success, Rise Reporter, August 1993.

Rand Adams is Mental Health Coordinator at Rise, in Spring Lake Park, Minnesota.

National Trends in Day and Employment Services

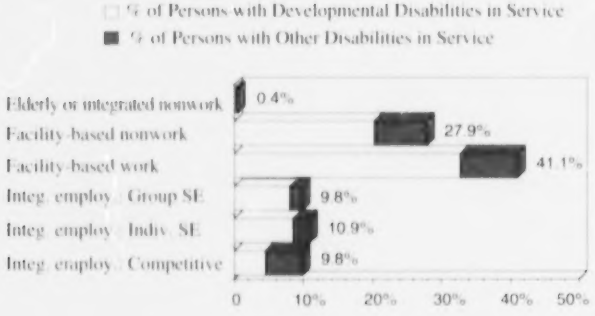
by Martha J. McGaughey

A survey of day or employment services for 1991 in 20 states has revealed some interesting service trends that have occurred since the initial survey in 1986. The 1991 study included 643 respondents, with 94 of those also participating in the 1986 survey. The results reveal that national trends in day and employment services are mixed. Although utilization of integrated employment has increased significantly over the five year period, the number of persons in facility-based work also has increased significantly. It appears that integrated employment is more an addition to the service array than a replacement for segregated services.

■ Types of Programs

The distribution of persons served across the targeted services during 1991 is displayed in Figure 1. As with the earlier study, the largest percentage of persons with disabilities are still being served in facility-based work programs. Facility-based nonwork programs were the second most frequently utilized service. For integrated employment (where the majority of individuals do not have a disability), the distribution was relatively equal across the three services: group supported employment (defined as enclaves, mobile crews, and other), individual supported employment (with ongoing supports), and competitive employment (where supports provided are time-limited). The overall integrated employment rate was 30%, compared with 17% for 1986. Special programs for elderly persons with disabilities were provided for less than one percent of the total population served. Of those providing this service, 47% reported that the programs were primarily integrated with elderly persons who do not have a developmental or early onset disability.

Figure 1: Percent of Individuals Served by Day and Employment Services



Total Number of Persons Served = 104,303

* 73% of elderly and integrated nonwork have developmental disabilities

The survey also inquired about the number of individuals served in each setting who would meet the criteria stipulated in the federal definition of developmental disability. Overall, 75% of those served were classified according to this definition. The distribution across settings mirrored this percentage except for competitive employment, where less than half of those served were labeled with a developmental disability.

■ Changes in Services: 1986-91

An analysis was conducted of the 94 respondents who answered both surveys to examine whether there were significant differences in the means for common variables across the five year period. (See Table 1). These 94 organizations represent a larger than average subsample of respondents; an average of 206 persons were served by the subsample compared with an average of 168 for the entire

Table 1: Characteristics of Responding Agencies for 1991 Compared with Respondents to 1986 Survey

Characteristic	1991 Survey Mean	1986 Survey Mean	# of Responding Agencies
Total Served by Agency*	206	153	94
% with Developmental Dis.	75%	77%	94
Competitive Employment (CE)			
% Offering CE	70%	67%	94
# in CE***	32	12	50
% in CE	18%	16%	50
Supported Employment (SE)			
% Offering SE***	90%	42%	94
# in SE***	47	6	60
% in SE***	29%	7%	60
Facility-based Work (FBW)			
% Offering FBW	90%	90%	94
# in FBW**	104	81	78
% in FBW***	51%	77%	78

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

sample of 643 respondents. The percentage of individuals with developmental disabilities served remained relatively stable across the years (77% and 75%). The percentage of respondents that provided competitive employment and facility-based work remained level, with few organizations adding or deleting these services. However, the percentage offering supported employment increased significantly to 90% of those responding.

The number of individuals served in each setting and the average percentage served across settings were also examined. (Note that the service percentages will not add to-100% because they are based on average percentages per agency instead of aggregate percentages across the service array). As with the total number of individuals served, the number served in each of the employment settings increased significantly for this sample of respondents. Yet, only the percentage served in supported employment and facility-based work changed significantly over the 5 year period. The percentage served in facility-based work dropped significantly, and most of this reduction appears to be accounted for by an increase in the percentage served in supported employment. For facility-based work, both the number and percentage served need to be viewed together, because the reduction in the percentage served was not also accompanied by a reduction in the number served. Indeed, the opposite actually happened.

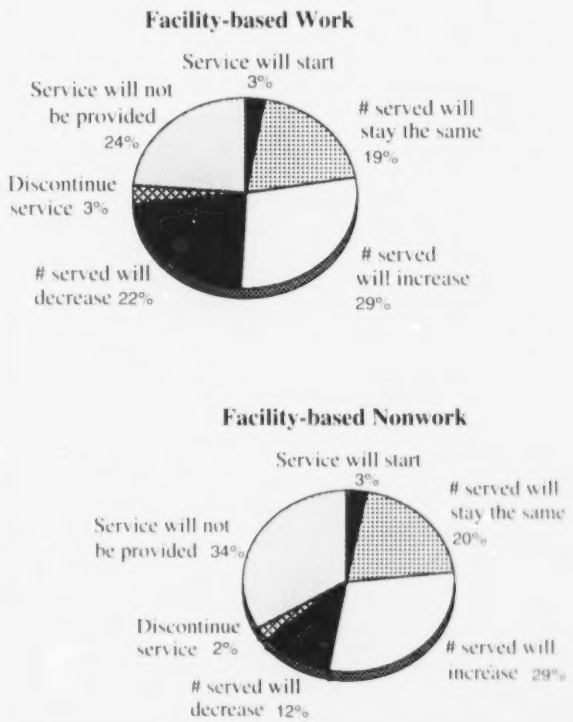
Even though utilization of integrated employment services has increased significantly across the five year period, the number of persons in facility-based work also has increased significantly. We appear to be adding integrated employment as a service component rather than replacing segregated services with integrated ones. This is a troubling finding for those of us who advocate for converting or phasing out facility-based employment services.

■ Future Trends

Respondents also were asked to provide information regarding previous and projected trends for both integrated and segregated services operated by their agency. The vast majority of respondents indicated that they plan to increase the number of individuals served in integrated employment; 72% will increase those served in individual supported employment, 51% competitive employment, and 47% group supported employment. Furthermore, approximately 10% of the respondents plan to start providing one of these integrated employment services during the next five years.

Projected trends related to facility-based services are somewhat more complex. (See Figure 2). For example, about 3% plan to start either facility-based work or nonwork services, about 20% plan to serve the same number of persons, 29% plan to increase the number of individuals served in either of these service options, and only 2-3% plan to discontinue a facility-based service. Other trends across the two facility-based services are less consistent. Compared with nonwork services, facility-based work is more likely to be provided over the next five years, but the number of persons served is more likely to decrease.

Figure 2: Projected Segregated Employment Trends Over the Next Five Years


Facility-based Work
Service will start 3%
Service will not be provided 24%
served will stay the same 19%
Discontinue service 3%
served will decrease 22%
served will increase 29%
Facility-based Nonwork
Service will start 3%
served will stay the same 20%
Service will not be provided 34%
Discontinue service 2%
served will increase 29%
served will decrease 12%

■ Implications

Concerns expressed earlier with respect to maintaining facility-based services are also relevant for the next five-year period. However, the fact that almost one-fourth of the respondents plan to decrease the number in facility-based work is an encouraging sign. Funding and policy incentives that are effective in expanding integrated employment services or in phasing out segregated services should continue to be investigated at the state and local levels. Service providers and policymakers could then implement policies and practices that are particularly effective at replacing a segregated service system with an integrated one.

Martha J. McGaughey is Research Coordinator with the Training and Research Institute for People with Disabilities, The Children's Hospital, Boston. Additional authors of the study are William Kiernan, Lorraine McNally, and Dana Gilmore. The complete report is available from the Training and Research Institute for People with Disabilities, at (617) 735-6271.

IDEA and Rehab Act Amendments: Impact on Employment

edited by Barbara Guy, Patricia Merrill, and David R. Johnson

In the first two years of the 1990s, Congress amended legislation that has an important impact upon employment services for persons with developmental disabilities: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 101-476), the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-392), the Rehabilitation Act Amendments (P.L. 102-569), and the Job Training Reform Amendments of 1992 (P.L. 102-367). Implementation of these four pieces of legislation, along with the Americans with Disabilities Act, should ensure that by the end of the decade people with disabilities will have greater access to employment services and successful employment. In order for this to happen, people receiving or providing employment services need to be aware of the components of the legislation and implement not only their regulations but their intent and philosophy. The implications of any one of these acts are considerable, making brief discussion of all impossible. Therefore, this article highlights the components of two related acts that impact employment of people with developmental disabilities: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992.

■ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act amends the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments. The changes represented in IDEA that have critical influence on the employment opportunities for people with disabilities concern: (a) requirements for provision of transition services, (b) participation in meetings, and (c) agency responsibilities.

Transition Services Required

IDEA mandates that students, 16 years of age (or younger, if determined appropriate), must have a statement of transition services in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). The law defines transition services as: "a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation."

The definition of a coordinated set of activities requires the IEP team to address employment development, instruction, community experiences, and other post-school adult living objectives. When appropriate it should also include acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. This means that employment must be addressed in the IEP. If it is determined that no services are needed in the area of employment, or any of the other areas, a statement to that effect and the basis upon which that decision was made must be included in the IEP.

The specification of employment and supported employment in the definition of transition services, and as one of a coordinated set of activities, means that when transition is discussed for a student, employment must be considered. Each of the other activities provides for attainment of skills that may be necessary for successful employment.

Participation in Meetings

Students must now attend and participate in their planning meetings. For many, this means that well before the IEP meeting they must participate in activities designed to enhance their knowledge base and communication skills, thus providing them opportunities to make informed decisions. IDEA seeks to involve the student, family, school, and outside agencies to increase the likelihood of smooth transitions from school to other service systems and post-school settings.

Agency Responsibilities

In addition to inviting representatives of outside agencies to the IEP meeting when transition is being discussed, IDEA states that the IEP should contain statements of each public and participating agency's responsibilities or linkage (or both) before the student leaves the school setting. This section should also include a commitment by the participating agency to meet the financial responsibility associated with provision of services. This is most important if an agency other than the school is responsible for providing or paying for needed services.

To further elaborate on the shared responsibility for transition services, Section 300.347(a)(b)(c) incorporates a statutory provision that requires the public agency responsible for a student's education (e.g., school) to initiate a planning meeting if a participating agency (e.g., V.R.) has failed to provide agreed upon transition services. The purpose for this meeting is to define alternative strategies for meeting the student's IEP transition requirements.

■ Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992

The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 demonstrate Congress' intent to streamline access from education to vocational rehabilitation (VR). Their intent is evidenced by incorporation of the same definition of transition services

used in IDEA, increased requirements for interagency collaboration, and the topics to be discussed here: (a) the redefinition of eligibility criteria, (b) new requirements for the individualized written plan (IWRP), and (c) expansion of services. The regulations for implementation of the act are not yet written, therefore, the following discussion is based on the language of the law itself.

Eligibility Determination Redefined

Changes in the criteria for eligibility are perhaps the most important changes in the amendments; they should make it easier for people with disabilities to receive VR services. An eligible individual is now defined by the amendments as one who "(i) has a physical or mental impairment which for such individual constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment, and (ii) can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from VR services." Someone who has been judged eligible for either Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income will be presumed to have a physical or mental impairment under the first part of the definition. They will, however, need to be determined as benefiting from an employment outcome in order to receive VR services.

Though applicants must be able to benefit in terms of an employment outcome, the definition of employment outcome has broadened from "employability" to include a variety of employment types. It is defined by the amendments as, "entering or retaining full-time, or, if appropriate, part-time, competitive employment in the integrated labor market (including satisfying the vocational outcome of supported employment) or satisfying any other vocational outcome the Secretary may determine." In addition, the individual must require "vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, enter into, engage in, or retain gainful employment."

Streamlining of the eligibility process is also found in the new assessment recommendations of the amendments. Assessment information from other sources, including other agencies and individuals with disabilities and their families, is to be used in conducting the eligibility determination. If these data are not enough to plan a program of services or to determine the severity of an individual's disability, additional information can be collected.

Many states have found it impossible to assure that services can be provided to all eligible individuals who apply. In these states, an "order of selection" must be established to determine priority on serving those with the most severe disabilities first.

Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP)

The amendments require the inclusion of more information on the IWRP that is written for each consumer of rehabilitation services. The IWRP must be designed to achieve the employment objective of the individual, consistent with his or her unique strengths, priorities, abilities, and capabilities. It is now required to contain a statement of long-term goals and objectives that shall, to the maximum extent appropriate, include placement in integrated settings. Specific services to be provided must be identified in the IWRP, as well as an evaluation procedure, the terms and conditions under which goods and services are provided, the entity or entities that will provide services, and the process used to provide or procure such services. As with IDEA, the Rehabilitation Act Amendments require participation of the individual receiving services. The IWRP must now contain a statement, in the words of the individual, describing how the individual participated in the process of determining services. Again, this emphasizes the need for people with disabilities to have decision-making skills and a knowledge of the available options. In terms of employment, this means that individuals need to be provided a variety of job experiences in order to determine their preferences.

Strengthened language regarding interagency collaboration encourages vocational rehabilitation counselors to become involved while students are still in school. Optimally, the IWRP and the IEP would be written together. Finally, a copy of the IWRP and any amendments to the plan must be furnished to the individual with a disability or an "authorized representative of the individual."

Expanded Services

The amendments clarify and expand the scope of rehabilitation services available to consumers. New requirements concerning rehabilitation technology (in place of rehabilitation engineering) should help people with disabilities get the technology assistance they need during and after the rehabilitation process. State plans must now describe how a "broad range of rehabilitation technology" will be provided at each stage of the rehabilitation process, and how these services will be made available on a statewide basis. States must also indicate what training will be provided to counselors, Client Assistance Program (CAP) staff, and other service personnel regarding rehabilitation technology.

Changes were also made in the supported employment provisions of the Act to help ensure that individuals with severe disabilities are provided these services. The targeted group is now specifically those individuals with the most severe disabilities, and they are to be provided with "intensive services." The intensity of services, while yet to be defined by regulation, is not to be defined by specific numerical requirements or other "arbitrary limits," according to the Senate Report.

The issue of extended services is still important, but the new amendments are somewhat less strict. They allow for identifying the "natural supports" (such as coworkers) who may provide support on the job site, and provide for time-limited services when there is a "reasonable expectation" that extended services will become available.

Laws, continued on page 19

Funding Long-Term Support: Ideas from Experts

by Joyce M. Albin and Roz Slovic

One of the questions repeatedly raised by state agencies, service provider organizations, families, and other advocates for supported employment is, "How do we ensure resources for longterm support?" Many states are facing budget crises in the traditional funding agencies for long-term services for people with developmental disabilities. Other populations - such as individuals with traumatic brain injury or chronic mental illness - while by definition eligible for supported employment, may never have had access to a consistent or sufficient funding stream to maintain long-term support.

In response to these needs, The Employment Network at the University of Oregon brought together working groups of experts from 32 states and territories to participate in forums addressing funding issues across states. The participants were consumers and family members, vocational rehabilitation counselors and administrators, service providers, personnel from developmental disabilities and mental health state agencies, members of advocacy groups, and personnel from Title III state change projects. Forum participants included people with experience in supported employment with a variety of populations.

The forum resulted in development of a vision for long-term support, and generation of a list of flexible, creative, consumer/family driven, and community supported options. The group-generated options can be listed under four broad headings: Using New and Existing Resources, Improving Use of Technology of Support, Developing Partnerships with Business and Labor, and Making Better Use of Medicaid Waiver and Regular State Plan Services.

- **Using New and Existing Resources**. There are many different avenues to take within this general strategy. First, restructuring existing resources can be done by (1) reorganizing existing funds to free funding for extended services; (2) using public dollars to leverage support money rather than to provide direct services; (3) using case management and vocational rehabilitation counselor services in new ways; (4) using existing vendors in new ways; and (5) changing existing rules to allow for more flexibility and creativity in the use of resources to meet the long-term support needs of individuals in employment.

  Finding new community resources that are not typically accessed for supported employment might include asking for support from civic organizations, accessing universities for practicum students, talking with industry-based groups, working with schools and human service agencies that may not typically provide employment related support, and focusing on the community rather than systems to develop support. Pursuing new public revenue such as unemployment funds, demonstration project dollars, workers compensation funds and others is another strategy. And, finally, using individual and family resources can be an avenue for securing long-term funding through Social Security Work Incentives, educational insurance policies (which could be used for funding long-term support), private insurance, and an individual trust fund for later use.

- **Improving Use of Technology.** The use of assistive technology can be made more effective by: (1) using assistive technology to reduce support needs; (2) encouraging assistive technology projects to fund or work in coordination with supported employment programs; and (3) examining the Rehabilitation Act Amendments for new implications for the use of assistive technology.

- **Creating Partnerships with Business and Labor.** There are many ways to encourage partnerships with business and labor. Looking for natural supports within companies is one strategy. This can be done by (1) using Employee Assistance Programs to provide counseling and other support, (2) training existing workforce to assist workers to maintain employment, (3) asking the labor union to support individuals, and (4) promoting business "ownership" of the employment of people with disabilities. Sometimes, sharing support responsibilities with the company by funding companies to do it themselves is a good initial approach to building naturally supportive employment environments.

- **Using Medicaid and Regular State Plan Services.** The first step in making better use of these options is to place the individuals on a waiting list for a waiver if they're not already receiving waiver dollars. Waiver day habilitation money can then be used for lifestyle planning. Medicaid targeted case management can be used for non-vocational support services, and to monitor the need for more intensive vocational support during job maintenance. Basically, the option programs should be used to the full extent possible.

The message of the forum was that people involved with supported employment need to put on a new pair of glasses to see possible resources - both system-based and non-system resources - that may be pieced together to achieve long-term support. The suggestions described above are only a few of the many shared during the forum.

Joyce M. Albin and Roz Slovic are Project Associates with The Employment Network at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon. A complete report of findings is available from Pam Whaley, Specialized Training Program, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403.

Fee for Service

by Gail Rheinheimer, Debby VanCovern, Howard Green, Grant Revell, and Kathy Inge

Ongoing development of long-term financial resources is essential to meet the needs of individuals entering supported employment. Many state vocational rehabilitation programs have successfully implemented cooperative agreements and leveraged extended service dollars from long-term funding agencies. Some states are securing dollars through Medicaid, Social Security, and legislative appropriations. Private providers are aggressively seeking diverse and alternative resources and identifying creative mechanisms for using non-traditional sources.

For supported employment services to be available to the full population of people with varied and significant challenges to employment, new and alternative funding sources and support strategies must continue to be pursued. A variety of possible funding options are described below:

- **Negotiated Hourly Rate.** Some state and local funding agencies negotiate fees with providers of supported employment services. Hourly rates are established through cost formulas based on the program cost of one hour of provider time in direct service. In hourly rate systems, expected hours of individual services usually are authorized on a monthly basis and variations in intervention are negotiated with the funding agency as they occur. Fees compatible with the needs and capacities of each agency allow for ongoing service improvement and growth.
- **Fixed Hourly Rate**. Some state and local funding agencies establish standard hourly rates of reimbursement for all providers. These rates may differ for various components of supported employment services of consumer populations. A risk inherent in fixed rate systems is payment below program expenses. In such cases, services must be subsidized, salaries reduced, or staff terminated. Ongoing evaluation and upgrades of fixed rates are necessary to ensure program stability and growth.
- **Flat Rates**. Flat rates for specific service components can be either negotiated or fixed, covering such activities as vocational assessment, job placement, or monthly ongoing support. Rates are determined by average costs over time and do not vary with individual intervention hours. Providers must be efficient with available service hours but have nonfiscal incentive to serve people needing extensive staff time. Rate differentials for services to people with greater challenges may facilitate coverage of costs and placement of people with more severe disabilities.
- **Cost Reimbursement Contracts/Grants**. Cost reimbursement systems provide payment for annual program costs and are tied to projected goals and activities rather than to individual services or intervention. A funding organization financially supports a program or a component of services, such as follow-along support, and identifies individuals to be served by the provider. Contract goals for number of people served are often reduced for people with more significant challenges to ensure services to this population. Contracts and grants are frequently used to start-up new programs or ensure program stability.
- **"Slot" Contracts**. A vocational rehabilitation agency might contract slots of supported employment services at annual costs, which is similar to traditional purchase-or-service mechanisms used with day programs and sheltered employment. This service capacity is then available for a prescribed number of people during the year. In slot contracts, fees for individuals served remain the same, regardless of type or intensity of services. Costs per slot are determined by dividing either the annual program costs or the funding capacity by the projected number of individuals to be served. As with flat rates, fiscal incentives for serving people with greater needs are not present.
- **Per diem Payments**. Per diem payments reimburse supported employment providers for days on which the supported employee actually works. Daily rates may be set by the funding agency or negotiated with the provider. Fees remain fixed even with changes in intervention level.
- **Staffing Contracts**. An approach in which the funding agency and supported employment provider share resources is through a staffing contract. The funding organization hires or provides funding for the needed staff and shares space, supervision, administrative support, and training with the supported employment organization.

This sampling of funding arrangement indicates the potential for creative solutions to funding barriers. Ongoing modifications reflecting individual, service, and funding needs should be made, and interagency reviews are necessary to ensure program and individual stability and growth.

Gail Rheinheimer is Service Area Quality Manager with the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services, Roanoke; Debby VanCovern, Howard Green, Grant Revell, and Kathy Inge are Research Associates with the RTC on Supported Employment, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond.

Adapted with permission from Rheinheimer, G.B., VanCovern, D., Green, H., Revell, G., & Inge, K. (1993). Finding the common denominator: A supported employment guide to long term funding supports and services for people with severe disabilities. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Supported Employment.

Resources

■ Organizations

- **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.** 1801 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20507 • (800) 669-3362 (for publications); (800) 669-4000 (for answers to questions); (800) 800-3302 (TDD). Provides technical assistance and information regarding Title I (employment).
- **President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Information Line.** 1331 F Street NW, Washington, DC 20004 • (800) 232-9675; (202) 376-6205 (TDD). Provides information regarding employment of people with disabilities.
- **North Central Regional Exchange.** Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 6 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Drive SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 • (612) 624-4848. The purpose of the North Central Regional Exchange (NCRIE) is to identify and promote the adoption of exemplary rehabilitation programs for persons with disabilities in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Program profiles, a newsletter, technical assistance publications and other resources are available. The NCRIE specifically focuses on programs in the areas of transition, supported employment, and parent/professional collaboration.

■ Publications and Training Materials

- **Competency-based Training for Supported Employment Personnel** (1990). By T. Wallace, D.R. Johnson, & R. Erickson. This comprehensive training resource manual and corresponding instructor's guide is designed for personnel involved in supported employment programs. It consists of five modules that cover guiding principles and professional behavior in supported employment, assessment and career planning, job development and job match, systematic training, ongoing monitoring and follow-up, case management and service coordination, and individual consumer needs. Available from Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 • (612) 624-4848.
- **Tools of the Trade: A Hands-On Training Program for Supported Employment Personnel** (1990). This seven book series, 650 pages total, features a comprehensive training curriculum for personnel working in a direct service capacity with persons in supported employment. Each chapter includes specialization exercises and activities. Review questions are found at the conclusion of each book. Available from Rise Inc., 8406 Sunset Rd., Minneapolis, MN 55432 • (612) 786-8334.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment** (1988). By Wehman, P. & Moon, M.S. This book focuses on how vocational rehabilitation personnel can facilitate and implement supported employment for youth and adults with disabilities. Practical strategies, case studies, and model programs are described to provide the reader with information on such topics as the training and management of vocational rehabilitation staff, designing preservice and inservice programs, and enhancing employment outcomes with specific populations. Available from Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285-4945 • (800) 638-3775.
- **Opportunity Knocking: the Story of Supported Employment** (1988). By PACER Center, Inc. A booklet for parents that explains this employment option. Available from PACER Center, Inc., 4826 Chicago Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55417 • (612) 827-2966.
- **Bibliography of Supported Employment** (April, 1993). Available from Andrea Cioffi or Danielle Renes at the Employment Network, University of Oregon, 135 Education Bldg., Eugene, OR 97403 • (503) 686-5311.
- **IMPACT: Feature Issue on the ADA** (December, 1992). A 20-page newsletter focusing on applications and implications of the Americans with Disabilities Act for people with developmental disabilities. Available from the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 • (612) 624-4512.
- **Going to Work: Profiles in Supported Employment** (1992). By D.R. Johnson, T. Mangan, J. Beevers, and R. Erickson. This booklet profiles eight individuals with severe disabilities employed in the community. The profiles illustrate a number of approaches to developing and sustaining supported employment. Available from the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 • (612) 624-4512.

■ Pamphlets and Other Materials

- **The Americans with Disabilities Act: Your Responsibilities as an Employer**, and **The Americans with Disabilities Act: Your Rights as an Individual with a Disability.** Available from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1801 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20507 • (800) 669-3392.
- **Doing Business in Compliance with the ADA**. Available from the Foundation on Employment and Disability • (310) 214-3430.

Evolution, continued from page 1

development and follow-up services as factors contributing to successful job placement and retention. The rapid evolution of supported employment during the 1980s was based, in large part, on the following:

- Responsive federal/state social policies and legislation.
- Aggressive advocacy efforts.
- Improvements in job placement and training strategies.
- Expansion in the development of community-based services for persons with severe disabilities as a result of deinstitutionalization.
- Increasing emphasis placed upon the potential benefits of supported employment in enabling individuals to achieve economic self-sufficiency and community integration.

At last report, a total of 32,342 individuals were being served in supported employment programs nationally, representing a 226% increase over the 1986 to 1988 period alone (Wehman, Kregel, & Shafer, 1989).

Center-stage in supported employment's short history has been the need for ongoing evaluations of its social and economic benefits and outcomes. Reliable and complete outcome and cost information are fast becoming an essential aspect of federal, state, and local decision making, and a necessity for planning and improving supported employment programs and services. As the goals of employment services vis-à-vis supported employment for people with disabilities broadened during the 1980s, nonmonetary outcomes were increasingly included in benefit-cost models to express the social benefits of such services. Nonmonetary outcomes such as increased independence, improved quality of life, increased physical and social integration, and other indices of improved social well-being have continued to evolve as important considerations in outcome evaluations of employment programs. This approach in evaluating employment programs is argued on the grounds that any outcome that increases social well-being is relevant to policy, program, and budgetary decision making and, as such, is the legitimate concern of benefit-cost analysis.

Along with the evolution of supported employment, distinct service delivery models, strategies, and practices have emerged. A variety of individual and small group approaches have been developed, ensuring that irrespective of the severity of an individual's disability, employment is an attainable goal. Encouraging the development of natural supports, individual choice, and family involvement is a strategy used to ensure that the needs and desires of individuals with disabilities are being addressed.

Supported employment is fast becoming the preferred service delivery alternative for achieving broad social and economic goals and outcomes for individuals with severe disabilities, family members, and society as a whole. The richness of this service alternative is now enthusiastically embraced within public policy, for it acknowledges the value and importance of "competitive employment in an integrated work setting for individuals who, because of their handicaps, need ongoing support services to perform that work" (Federal Register, 1987, p. 30546). This legacy of public policy may likely serve as part of the impetus for guaranteeing the future rights of individuals with severe disabilities in all areas of citizenship and community living.

References: Federal Register, 52(157), (1987, August 14), 30546-30552. Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Wehman, P., Kregel, J., & Shafer, M. S. (1989). Emerging trends in the national supported employment initiative: A preliminary analysis of twenty-seven states. Richmond VA: Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center.

David R. Johnson is Associate Director with the Institute on Community Integration, and Darrell R. Lewis is Professor with the Department of Educational Policy and Administration, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

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The amendments also authorize the provision of personal assistance services while individuals are receiving rehabilitation services. Personal assistance services include a variety of services to assist an individual with disabilities in daily living activities that increase "their control in life and ability to perform everyday activities on or off the job." Personal assistance services must be job-related, but do not have to be provided at the job site. This will allow more responsiveness in providing employment services, but if such services are provided by VR, they must be included in the IWRP.

■ Conclusion

The changes brought about by IDEA and the new amendments to the Rehabilitation Act should result in a more responsive service delivery system for people with disabilities. The streamlined eligibility determination process, the requirement for increased consumer involvement in service planning, the inclusion of employment as a transition service, and the focus on provision of those services at least by age 16, are all changes that directly impact successful employment for people with disabilities.

Note: This article is excerpted from Policy Update: IDEA: Its Impact on Transition Requirements, Winter 1993; and Policy Update: 1992 Rehabilitation Act Amendments: New Requirements for Transition, Spring 1993, published by the National Transition Network, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota.

Barbara Guy is Associate Director, Patricia Merrill is Communications Coordinator, and David R. Johnson is Director, National Transition Network, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

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- Resources

IMPACT: Feature Issue on Employment
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The mission of the Institute is to improve the quality and community orientation of professional services and social supports available to individuals with disabilities and their families. Inquiries about the Institute or IMPACT can be directed to: **Institute on Community Integration, 6 Pattee Hall, University of Minnesota, 150 Pillsbury Drive SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 • (612) 624-4848.** IMPACT is available in alternative formats upon request.

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